

INTERVIEW #14

Tape: 11 (B)
12(AO-500)

I14

Date: Feb. 11/75

Place: 1062 Doon Village Rd., Kitchener

Participant: Len Bechtel

Pre-War

- the church was most instrumental in teaching him about nonresistance; recalls how church leaders, eg E.J. Swalm and J.B. Martin, would come around and speak on it; in the family setting it was assumed and not spoken of very much
- thus, he simply accepted as the natural thing to do to go into A.S.W.; furthermore, the government made it easy for them to get in
- no mention of anti-CO feelings

War

- Emory Creek - good group; had a real feeling of camaraderie; there was a "good-natured acceptance of one another"
- worship - some attended merely out of a sense of duty
- occasionally, in the work they were doing, they felt that they were simply putting in time, -and were there just so that they would not be in the public eye
- felt that there must have been more useful work to be done, but did not know what; in this respect, their attitude was one of simply looking to their leaders and accepting their guidance
- there were charismatic leaders in camp, eg. Pay Good (at L. Cowichan), who kept the boys in good spirits and thus made the time go faster
- he draws a direct link between the sheltered rural setting and the awareness and acceptance of the concept of nonresistance - in that setting all of life revolves around the church and thus it can have more influence; does not feel that that influence is there as much today
- during his A.S.W. he was primarily concerned about his wife and son; attitude toward work was one of acceptance, but eagerly awaiting the day he could return; therefore, the experience was not that significant one way or the other as far as dedication to the concept of nonresistance is concerned
- today, has no strong feelings one way or the other - a person should behave according to the dictates of his conscience